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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEW MILESTONES ON THE 312 RIVERRUN**

*The ice rink at McFetridge Sports Center opens as work at California and Horner Parks continues and construction on the Irving Park Bridge begins*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced new milestones at the 312 RiverRun, nearly two mile recreational hub connecting the Irving Park, North Center, Avondale and Albany Park neighborhoods to three parks with one path. Led by the Chicago Park District, the new studio ice rink and expansion of McFetridge Sports Center is now complete, and work is continuing to improve California Park and Horner Park. The Chicago Department of Transportation will also begin construction of the Irving Park Road Bridge. The 312 RiverRun projects are part of the Mayor's Building on Burnham plan to invest in projects that create new recreational opportunities across Chicago.

"The 312 RiverRun project is yet another example the invaluable resources the Chicago River provides to our residents," said Mayor Emanuel. "While not complete, it is already clear that the 312 RiverRun will create an unparalleled network of outdoor recreational opportunities for residents while boosting neighborhood vibrancy and economic growth."

The 312 RiverRun project is a collaboration between the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), Department of Planning & Development (DPD) and the Chicago Park District and continues Mayor Emanuel's goal of developing a continuous river trail system. Once complete, the project will extend across 95 acres and provide residents with direct access to a network of recreational amenities supported by the Chicago Park District, including: wheelchair accessible baseball fields, fitness centers, playgrounds, an indoor ice skating rink, tennis courts, outdoor pool, boat houses and more.

The newly opened studio ice rink and expansions at McFetridge Sports Center is one of the first completed projects at the 312 RiverRun. The facility now houses a 200 feet by 85 feet ice sheet and the new 100 feet by 85 feet studio ice rink for competitive and recreational ice skating, hockey and tennis programs and special events.

"The transformational 312 RiverRun project enhances the quality of lives of community members with access to recreational amenities that are truly second to none," Chicago Park District Superintendent & CEO Michael P. Kelly. "The vision and execution of the 312 RiverRun will forever change the face of the riverfront on the north side for generations to come."

The year-round facility now offers more classes, new programming, manageable class sizes and more open ice time for public use. McFetridge Sports Center supports expanded community programming including edge/power skating classes, goalie instruction, 3 on 3 leagues, sled hockey for players with disabilities and specialty figure skating classes. Special events like the annual Figure Skating Ice Show, ice hockey tournaments for the home team River Dogs and the McFetridge Open and Turkey Trot annual tennis tournaments will continue. SMG, the world's leading provider of public building management, began managing McFetridge Sports Center for the Chicago Park District in 2012.

"As an avid hockey player, lifelong Blackhawks fan, and co-chair of the Congressional Hockey Caucus, I am always excited to see new ice rinks in Chicago," said Representative Mike Quigley (IL-05). "I join others in celebrating the opening of the rink at McFetridge Sports Center and the ongoing progress of the 312 RiverRun project, and I look forward to the many ways in which it will promote recreation, foster community, and grow our economy."

Improvements to Horner Park and California Parks will also continue. Construction to extend the bike trail and renovate the baseball fields will start in 2019, following the recently completed addition of soccer mini-pitches and resurfaced four tennis courts at Horner Park. The Chicago Park District recently restored the riverbank at the Park in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which had previously faced erosion and was inaccessible to visitors. Construction at California Park will include resurfacing four tennis courts and two basketball courts.

Work will also begin on the Irving Park Road Bridge and Multi-Use Path, which will create a new pedestrian and bike path under Irving Park Road along the west bank of the North Branch. The new underbridge multi-use path will link California Park to Horner Park to the north. Work on the Irving Park Road Bridge will also replace the existing 104-year-old structure and widen the roadway. The new bridge and path are expected to be complete in summer 2020.

"CDOT is excited to get started on the Irving Park Road Bridge project, which will improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and reconstruct a critical river bridge," CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld said. "This series of projects that are part of 312 RiverRun demonstrate Mayor Emanuel's commitment to creating new, active recreational opportunities for Chicago residents in our neighborhoods."

Construction is proceeding through the winter on another CDOT project, the Riverview Bridge, which will cross over the North Branch of the Chicago River and under the Addison Road Bridge. The bridge will provide a new connection for runners, bicyclists and pedestrians between the paths in Clark Park to the south and California Park to the north. Extending more than 1,000 feet in length and 16 feet wide, the new Riverview Bridge will be the longest pedestrian river bridge in the city. It will have an elevation of more than 18 feet where it crosses the river to accommodate recreational use by boaters. Its unobstructed access will also eliminate the need for residents to cross major streets, enhancing pedestrian safety.

Completion of the Riverview Bridge, expected in summer 2019, and the Irving Park Road Bridge project will establish the full 312 RiverRun, providing a continuous path from Belmont to Montrose.

The 312 RiverRun project is a key component of Building on Burnham, Mayor Emanuel's comprehensive plan to invest in the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas and recreational opportunities in neighborhoods across the city. The project is also supported by numerous federal, state and local agencies, with funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and local sources. Other agencies involved included the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Illinois EPA and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In addition, it required an agreement between CDOT and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to lease four parcels of land along the North Branch.

Under Mayor Emanuel's Building on Burnham plan, 985 acres of parks have been acquired and 5.5 miles of waterfront access have been developed since 2011, with continued plans to acquire additional parkland and further develop the waterfront in the coming years.